

## Some Catholic Social Teaching and Prayer to Consider for LSAP Goal #5

1. Laudato Si', Chapter 6, para. 216-221
2. Laudato Si' video summary links for Chapter 6
3. **Prayer for Listening (Laudato Si' Movement)**

### 1. Laudato Si', para. 216 - 221.

#### **Ecological Conversion**

216. The rich heritage of Christian spirituality, the fruit of twenty centuries of personal and communal experience, has a precious contribution to make to the renewal of humanity. Here, I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. A commitment this lofty cannot be sustained by doctrine alone, without a spirituality capable of inspiring us, without an "interior impulse which encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity".[151] Admittedly, Christians have not always appropriated and developed the spiritual treasures bestowed by God upon the Church, where the life of the spirit is not dissociated from the body or from nature or from worldly realities, but lived in and with them, in communion with all that surrounds us.

217. "The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast".[152] For this reason, the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion. It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an "**ecological conversion**", whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.

218. In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change. The Australian bishops spoke of the importance of such conversion for achieving reconciliation with creation: "To achieve such reconciliation, we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God's creation through our actions and our failure to act. We need to experience a conversion, or change of heart".[153]

219. Nevertheless, self-improvement on the part of individuals will not by itself remedy the extremely complex situation facing our world today. Isolated individuals can lose their ability and freedom to escape the utilitarian mindset, and end up prey to an unethical consumerism bereft of social or ecological awareness. Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds. This task "will make such tremendous demands of

man that he could never achieve it by individual initiative or even by the united effort of men bred in an individualistic way. The work of dominating the world calls for a union of skills and a unity of achievement that can only grow from quite a different attitude".[154] The ecological conversion needed to bring about lasting change is also a community conversion.

220. This conversion calls for a number of attitudes which together foster a spirit of generous care, full of tenderness. First, it entails gratitude and gratuitousness, a recognition that the world is God's loving gift, and that we are called quietly to imitate his generosity in self-sacrifice and good works: "Do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing... and your Father who sees in secret will reward you" (Mt 6:3-4). It also entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. As believers, we do not look at the world from without but from within, conscious of the bonds with which the Father has linked us to all beings. By developing our individual, God-given capacities, an ecological conversion can inspire us to greater creativity and enthusiasm in resolving the world's problems and in offering ourselves to God "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable" (Rom 12:1). We do not understand our superiority as a reason for personal glory or irresponsible dominion, but rather as a different capacity which, in its turn, entails a serious responsibility stemming from our faith.

221. Various convictions of our faith, developed at the beginning of this Encyclical can help us to enrich the meaning of this conversion. These include the awareness that each creature reflects something of God and has a message to convey to us, and the security that Christ has taken unto himself this material world and now, risen, is intimately present to each being, surrounding it with his affection and penetrating it with his light. Then too, there is the recognition that God created the world, writing into it an order and a dynamism that human beings have no right to ignore. We read in the Gospel that Jesus says of the birds of the air that "not one of them is forgotten before God" (Lk 12:6). How then can we possibly mistreat them or cause them harm? I ask all Christians to recognize and to live fully this dimension of their conversion. May the power and the light of the grace we have received also be evident in our relationship to other creatures and to the world around us. In this way, we will help nurture that sublime fraternity with all creation which Saint Francis of Assisi so radiantly embodied.

## 2. [Links to Fr Dan Horan's videos, summarizing Laudato Si' Chapter 6:](#)

Episodes 13 & 14 of this series totals about 32 minutes. Please see:

[https://youtu.be/fj-a5qVj3nY?list=PLO2W1tFFtdJn9V9\\_DvEbz9Bygt7XsYXRj](https://youtu.be/fj-a5qVj3nY?list=PLO2W1tFFtdJn9V9_DvEbz9Bygt7XsYXRj)

### 3. Prayer for Listening (Laudato Si' Movement's Prayer Book)

#### **Prayer for Listening**

Most blessed holy Trinity, Creator, Savior and Ruah.  
Through Your Word of life all was and is created,  
All was redeemed and is called to redemption,  
All was united in Your bosom of love and is called to live in  
communion.

Because of You, dear Trinity, all of creation is  
a constant exercise of listening to Your Word  
So that we can embody the Word in our own lives.

Teach us, therefore, how to truly listen to  
Your creating and creative Word.

Remind us that Your Word is present and can be heard in each living being.  
May we listen and learn from Your message present throughout nature.

Open our ears and our hearts and teach us strength and courage so that we may hear the pain  
and suffering of our sister mother earth and of those most affected by the socio-environmental  
crisis.

We ask this in your Most Holy Name, Amen.

St. Francis of Assisi, pray for us. St Kateri Tekakwitha, pray for us.

*(Suzana Moreira, Laudato Si' Animator, and Coordinator of Eco-Conversion Programs at LSM . Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)*

